

Nation and serves as a guide on where to spend our resources from the Government. The Speaker and the minority leader should be urging all Members to work with and encourage their constituents to participate in this important civic ceremony.

#### SMITH AND WESSON LATEST VICTIM OF WHITE HOUSE ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, Smith and Wesson is but the latest victim of the administration's assault on democracy. The recent so-called voluntary agreement by the gun manufacturer follows a familiar script. First, the administration proposed mandatory trigger locks. Then, finding insufficient support among Congress, the people's representatives, the administration turned to ulterior, undemocratic means, to achieve its purpose. They threatened to unleash the full weight of the Federal Government upon the maker of a legal product by suing them into oblivion.

Guess what? The maker of the legal product decided to voluntarily do what the administration asked.

The administration makes no attempt to conceal the power grab. Last week's Wall Street Journal quoted White House domestic policy advisor, Bruce Reed, as stating the agreement shows that "the public good does not have to be held hostage to legislative stalemate." Legislative stalemate? Mr. Reed, it is called democracy.

Mr. Speaker, gun legislation has not moved because the majority of the people believe that those who pull the trigger are the ones actually responsible for the outcome, not gun manufacturers or law-abiding citizens who own firearms and use them responsibly.

The administration calls this voluntary; I call it extortion.

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#### LET US STAND AND BE COUNTED IN THE CENSUS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

EXTENDING CONCERN TO FAMILIES AFFECTED BY TEXAS DISASTERS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me offer my concern to our families and friends in the Fort Worth, Texas area with the terrible tornado that they experienced last evening, and to our families and friends in the Harris County area, with Phillips Petroleum, with the terrible tragedy of the explosion that happened at that plant.

Mr. Speaker, however, this morning, I want to talk about the importance and crucialness of the Census, not only

in this Nation but particularly in the State of Texas, where, from the 1990 Census, the State of Texas lost \$1 billion by undercounting 400,000 people.

Unfortunately, the State of Texas has a 33 percent return, but the fourth largest city in the Nation only has a 26 percent return. That is the city of Houston. Why? Because frivolous lawsuits are being filed alleging an invasion of privacy, not recognizing that this responsibility is a constitutional responsibility and that in fact these questions have not ever been proven to have been used or misused by the Census Bureau.

We need to have the information on the homeless, and I applaud the efforts being made by them. I ask of the INS not to do unnecessary and provocative raids of immigrants to discourage them from being counted. We must count every single person in the United States. We all must count. This is a constitutional right and responsibility and duty. Let us stand up and be counted.

#### THE EDUCATION SAVINGS AND SCHOOL EXCELLENCE ACT

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House will consider the Education Savings and School Excellence Act. The proposal allows parents to invest more in their child's education. It allows other relatives, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, to invest in a child's education. A parent's employer may contribute, too.

These vital education resources will be made available to cover education expenses that best meet the child's need, be it a tutor, books, tuition, or even a computer.

H.R. 7 would help the families of at least 52 million children. Seventy percent of the tax savings under our Education Savings and School Excellence Act will go to children in public schools whose parents make less than \$75,000 a year, and 76 percent of the children who will benefit from ESA's attend public schools.

Promoting greater investment in learning is not an issue of rich versus poor or Democrat versus Republican, it is about fairness. It is about doing what is right.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues, let us pass H.R. 7, the Education Savings and School Excellence Act. Let us make sure no child is left behind.

#### GUN SAFETY

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, every day the Republican leadership wastes by not convening the Juvenile Justice Conference Committee, 13 children are

wasted as a result of gun violence. That is 13 children gone forever. This is not a game, this is about children's lives.

Our children need safety locks, they need effective background checks, and they need the NRA to loosen its grip on the Republican leadership. They need these things now. Guns kill. It is that simple.

According to the Justice Department, Federal gun prosecutions are up 16 percent, State and local gun prosecutions have risen 22 percent, but our children are still dying. The Republican leadership must convene a meeting of the Juvenile Justice Conference Committee to expand gun safety measures and protect our children.

I urge my Republican colleagues to stop playing politics with children's lives and start working on meaningful gun safety legislation. Our children's lives depend on it.

#### SUPPORT THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET AND ELIMINATE THE PUBLIC DEBT

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have a plan to pay Uncle Sam's credit card bills. For over 30 years, tax and spend liberals have racked up an enormous debt. It is just now beginning to be paid down, thanks to the GOP majority in the House and Senate.

In our budget, we will pay down \$3.6 trillion, yes, that is \$3.6 trillion, in public debt by the year 2013.

Why does this matter? If we ask a family in my district if they live better without debt, or if they would rather be sitting on massive credit card bills with high interest rates, it is pretty easy to guess the answer will be the former. They will have a hard time understanding the fact that a sizable chunk of our annual budget goes to pay creditors because government spending cannot be kept under control.

Mr. Speaker, paying the public debt will benefit everyone. Seniors will not have their social security funds raided, homebuyers will have lower mortgage rates, car buyers will have lower interest rates. This country will function better with a zero balance and maybe even a surplus to be given back to the taxpayer.

It is time to lift the burden of debt off our children. It is time to support the Republican budget and eliminate the public debt.

#### URGING HOUSE MEMBERS TO ENCOURAGE CONSTITUENTS TO RETURN CENSUS FORMS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Census forms are due. The Census form, the